

For December 30th/January Behind the Badge

The Evansville Police Departments is hoping that everyone will travel safe this Winter Season.

Here are some recommended winter driving tips found on the AAA web site.

- Avoid driving while you're fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
- Never mix radial tires with other tire types.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).

Tips for long distance winter trips:

- Watch weather reports prior to a long-distance drive or before driving in isolated areas. Delay trips when especially bad weather is expected. If you must leave, let other know your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.
- Always make sure your vehicle is in peak operating condition by having it inspected by a certified mechanic.
- Keep at least half a tank of gasoline in your vehicle at all times.
- Bring a cellular phone. Pack blankets, gloves, hats, food, water, and any needed medication in your vehicle.
- If you become snow-bound, stay with your vehicle. It provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Don't try to walk in a severe storm. It's easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
- Don't over exert yourself if you try to push or dig your vehicle out of the snow.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.

- Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust could cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment with the engine running.
- Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps.
- If possible run the engine and heater just long enough to remove the chill and to conserve gasoline.

Tips for driving in the snow:

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly to accelerate is the best method for retraining traction and avoiding skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry. And take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning - nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- The normal dry pavement following distance of two to three seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety in front will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- Know your breaks. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, the best way to stop is threshold breaking. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady, pressure on the break pedal.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until the light changes, do it. Remember the key is to slow down well enough before the traffic light in hopes the light will change to green before you reach the mandatory stop location. You still MUST stop at red lights and stop signs.
- Don't power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill as slowly as possible.
- Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.
- Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can. Don't tempt fate: If you don't have somewhere you have to be, watch the snow from indoors.

We encourage our travelers who work in the Madison area to view the DOT sponsored "Madison area current travel information" page on the internet before leaving for work. This site provides camera images and a congestion map.

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/madison/index.htm>

Our Janesville and Rock County workers can visit

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/rock/>

Road conditions for the entire state can be found at

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/road/winter-roads.htm>

Or by calling 511

The Evansville Police Department wishes everyone safe travels this winter .